

Historic Documents & Background Information



The Fenner Coat of Arms

According to Burke's General Armory, the coat of arms belonging to the Fenner Family is as follows for the Fenners of Sussex:

Vert a cross argent charged with a cross formee gules between four eagles displayed of the second.

And above the shield and helmet is the crest described as:

An eagle displayed argent membered or.

Translated: "Green, a silver cross charged with a red cross between four silver eagles with spread wings." Above the shield and helmet, "a silver eagle, wings spread, beak and legs in gold."

Vert—Green; signifies hope, joy, and sometimes loyalty in love.

Cross—Being crossed at each four points is said to signify "the fourfold mystery of the cross." The cross also signifies faith, hope, and charity.

Gules—Red; denotes military fortitude and magnanimity; the "Martyr's Color."

Eagles—Which is usually represented with wings spread, signifies a man of action. Eagles are a symbol of power.

Background of Fenners in Switzerland

The Fenners in Switzerland settled in the county of Dubendorf, Kanton Zurich, town of Maur in 1306. They derived their name from the town of Gefenn. The Fenner name started out as Gevenner, meaning swampland in 1306.

Origin of the Fenner Name in England

The following account of early Fenners was constructed by information from Richard Fenner [See Contributors]. It outlines the arrival of the Celtic Fenners from Austria and their settlements in England. Also note the historic collaboration of Fenners with William the Conqueror in 1066.

By 500 BC, the Celts, originally from Austria, began to spread throughout Europe under pressure and invasion from Roman Empire. The Celtic tribes that survived settled in present-day Northern France, Southern England, Ireland and Scotland. Three of those tribes, the Scots, the Picts, and the Fens, migrated to Britain.

In 55 BC, Julius Caesar began to invade Britain. When the Romans would come to Britain, some of the people would retreat into the swamps and marshes. This frequently confounded the Romans, and they would go home empty handed. Among the groups that retreated to the marshes and swamplands were the Fens. The Fens must have been extremely successful people, because the marshes and swamplands were eventually named after them. Many researchers believe that the name Fen or Fenner comes from the term for marsh or swampland. The marshes, however, were probably named after the Fens.

The Romans were finally able to gain control of Britain, but the Britons were allowed to maintain their political freedom in exchange for a handsome fee. This continued until AD 43, when Claudius I began another conquest of Britain. In AD 61, the Romans invaded the eastern part of Britain, home of the Iceni people. Led by their queen, Boudicca, they attempted a bloody rebellion, but were defeated. Boudicca eventually committed suicide, and some of her people escaped to Amorica, in northern France. Some of the Fens were among the refugees. The land was eventually renamed Brittany because of the strong influence of the Britons. The Fens also changed their name to the French form, Venour.

The Fens that had stayed behind in England eventually became associated with the mysterious King Arthur. The poem *Roman de Brut*, written by the poet Wace in 1155, is a French translation of the original accounts of Arthur written by Geoffrey of Monmouth in 1139. Wace's poem contains the name Fenner.

The Fens fled to Wales (now western England) upon the arrival of the Angles and Saxons in the 400's, where they became experts at the Welsh long bow. In 1066, William the Conqueror, from Normandy, invaded England and defeated the Anglo/Saxon King Harold at the Battle of Hastings. William brought with him the French Venours. Baron LaVenour is recorded on the famous Bayeux Tapestry that depicts William's conquest. Also helping in the battle were the Welsh from the West, who had an axe to grind with the Anglo/Saxons. The Welsh included the Fens. Harold was reportedly killed by an arrow from a Welsh long bow, which was a popular weapon among the Fens. Since Hastings was given as a gift to Sir William Fenner after the battle, it wouldn't be any stretch of the imagination to insist that a Fenner killed King Harold and helped William the Conqueror win the decisive Battle of Hastings. Sir William Fenner and Baron LaVenour are recorded in the *Domesday Book*, which was a record of all the landowners in England, as ordered by William in 1086.

Fenners vs. the Spanish Armada

This is an account of Fenners and the great sea captain Francis Drake, who defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588. This story is from an unknown source, but can be substantiated in part by many documents freely available from google.com.

There were four Fenner brothers each commanding English ships involved in defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. These were William, George, Edward & Thomas from the village of West Wittering in Sussex. William, George & Edward spent 20 years harassing Spanish ships in semi-piratical raids leading up to the showdown of 1588, but the brother who held the most prominent place in history was Thomas Fenner.

Thomas first came to prominence in 1584 when Francis Drake chose him to command the flagship Elizabeth Buonaventura in a highly successful raid on the Spanish West Indies. The Catholic King Philip II of Spain had long harboured an

ambition to invade England and supplant the heretical Protestant Queen Elizabeth I. He hesitated to do so while Mary Queen of Scots still lived, for she had pretensions to the English throne, and Philip feared her connections with France. In 1587 Elizabeth signed her death warrant, and Philip promptly ordered the Armada to be prepared for invasion.

This led to Drake & Thomas Fenner beginning the campaign known as “the singeing of the King of Spain’s Beard.” They raided the Spanish naval base at Cadiz, burning 32 ships, 1,500 tons of stores, and carrying off four ships as prizes. Then they moved up the coast to Lisbon and destroyed another 24 ships. They sailed to Cape St Vincent—the southwest tip of the Iberian peninsula—captured Sagres castle, and brought all coastal shipping and fisheries in the area to a standstill. More important, they destroyed the year’s production of barrel staves essential for the Armada’s storage of fresh water and provisions. The result of all these operations was to delay the launch of the Armada by a full year. It was not until July 19, 1588 that the Spanish fleet of 130 ships was sighted off Cornwall. Philip’s plan was to sail up the English Channel, embark a large army from the Netherlands, and take it up the Thames estuary.

Thomas Fenner, now captain of the “Nonpareil” was one of the five officers forming the English naval council of war where strategy and tactics were worked out. His brother William commanded the “Aid,” Edward the “Swiftsure,” and George captained the galleon “Leicester.” A running battle raged up the Channel. Indecisive actions were fought off Plymouth and Portland, and then the English fleet reformed into four squadrons. Thomas Fenner was vice-admiral in Drake’s squadron. On July 25, the Spanish fleet was off Ventnor, IOW—the wind blowing from the Southwest. Drake and Fenner’s squadron launched a fierce onslaught from the windward. Fenner’s Nonpareil was one of two ships reported to have “struck their topsails and lain awhile by the whole fleet of Spain very bravely.” The English hatched a plan to drive the Armada on to the Owers Shoals off Bracklesham Bay. It was probably Fenner with his intimate knowledge of the area who suggested the idea to Drake. The Spaniards spotted the danger in the nick of time. Instead of standing up to their attackers and risking being blown into the shallows they sailed down the Channel and anchored off Calais.

At midnight on July 28, Drake launched a fireship attack. The terrified Spanish slipped their cables and made off along the coast towards Gravelines, hotly pursued by Fenner and Drake. The Spaniards were running short of ammunition and the close-range attack caused them heavy casualties. They narrowly escaped shipwreck on the Zeeland coast before making a run for home around the north coast of Scotland. A portion of the English fleet commanded by Thomas Fenner pursued them as far north as Newcastle, but ran short of stores and was forced to return. However, by that time the “invincible” Armada was a shattered wreck, the invasion a financially ruinous disaster, and no more than half the fleet which set sail ever regained Spanish ports.

The following year Drake employed Thomas as Vice-Admiral and William as Rear-Admiral in an unsuccessful expedition to put Don Antonio on the Portuguese throne, which had been usurped by the King of Spain. William was killed in the attempt and Thomas appears to have retired from the sea immediately afterwards. Little is known of Edward after 1588. George became Admiral of the Narrow Seas, and pursued an illustrious naval career until he succeeded his father-in-law Captain John Warde as Governor of Sandgate Castle, Folkestone in 1602.

Government Correspondance

Letters to Governor Arthur Fenner from George Washington are from *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor. Vol. 31. New York, June 4, 1790. The first is an acknowledgement of Rhode Island's ratification of the Constitution. The second is a cover letter from George Washington to Arthur Fenner with a (ratified and corrected?) copy of the Constitution. The third is a cover letter from Arthur Fenner to Thomas Jefferson with the Rhode Island election results of 1802.

To His Excellency Arthur Fenner Governor of the State of Rhode Island

Sir: In acknowledging the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 29th of May, I cannot forbear to congratulate you and the people of your State upon the happy event which has since taken place by the adoption and ratification of the Constitution of the United States by the Convention of Rhode Island.

Having now attained the desirable object of uniting under one general Government all those States which were originally confederated, we have a right to expect, with the blessing of a divine providence, that our Country will afford us all those domestic enjoyments of which a free people only can boast; and at the same time secure that respectability abroad which she is entitled to by nature and from circumstances. Since the bond of Union is now complete, and we once more consider ourselves as one family, it is much to be hoped that reproaches will cease and prejudices be done away; for we should all remember that we are members of that community upon whose general success depends our particular and individual welfare; and, therefore, if we mean to support the Liberty and Independence which it has cost us so much blood and treasure to establish, we must drive far away the demon of party spirit and local reproach.

I should be deficient in politeness as well as sensibility were I to close this letter without acknowledging the impression, which the great personal regard and warm wishes for my individual felicity expressed in your Letter has made on me.

Yours,

Geo. Washington

To His Excellency Arthur Fenner, Governor of the State of Rhode Island

Sir,

I take the liberty of committing the enclosed paper to your Excellency's care requesting that it may be presented on the first proper occasion.

I have the honor to be with due consideration,

Your Excellency's Most Obedient Servant

Geo. Washington
November 20th, 1790

Providence 12th May 1802

Sir,

Permit me to introduce to you Col. Henry Smith the bearer of this letter. He is a gentleman of respectable character in this state, much esteemed by the citizens of the Town of Providence in which he was born and now resides. He has expressed a wish of being made known to your Excellency.

Col Smith can inform you of the result of our late election. I pray you to [accept?] assurance of my high consideration [? unknown word].

Arthur Fenner

First Hemophiliac Heart Transplant

Received from Neal Fenner <laceygirl@bigpond.com> on March 29, 2002.

Robert Fenner of Australia was the first hemophiliac in the world to receive a heart transplant. His grandson, Neal Fenner, said, "I'm proud of my grandfather not because of his braveness but because of his humble nature, he wasn't one to complain of his disease."

Will of Captain Arthur Fenner [1]

Note: spellings have been left unedited; capitalization has been modernized.

Here followeth the record of the last will & testament of Captⁿ: Arthur Ffenner of Providence, who departed this life October y^e 10th 1703:

In the name of God amen; I Arthur Ffenner of Providence, in the collony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations &c: being weake in body but in perfect understanding and memory, thanks be to Almighty God for the same, calling to mind my mortallitye; and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to die; and being willing to set my house in order, doe make my last will and testament in manner and forme following; that is to say, ffirst and principally, I comend my soule into the hands of Almighty God, hoping through the merritts of my Savior Jesus Christ to have full & free pardon of all my sins, and to inherit everlasting life, and my body I comit to the earth to be decently buried at the descretion of my executors hereafter named, and as touch in the disposition of all such temporall estate as it hath pleased God to bestow upon me, I give and bequeath as ffolloweth.

Ffirst I will that my debts and ffunerall charges shall be paid and discharged.

Item. I give and bequeath to my deare and loveing wife Holong Ffenner one cow the best shee can chuse in my herd, and tenn pounds of currant money per annu[m] duering her naturall life after my decease, that is tenn pounds every yeare to be paid to her by my executors hereafter names, or by their order yearely, and also the keeping of a cow, and one roome which shee shall see cause to chuse in any of my houseing duering her naturall life for her comfortable living, and all my houseal goods to be at her owne dispose after my decease.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my two daughtes Ffrellove Craufford, and Bethiah Kelton the sum of tenn poundes a piece of money, or pay equivalent to money, to be paid unto them by my executors within a yeare after my decease.

Item. I give unto my daughter Phebe Latham the sum of tenn shillings to be paid to her within 1 yeare after my decease; and also I will for reason best knowne to mysele, that my two executors hereafter named, doe keepe in deposit nine

pounds tenn shillings of money, or pay equivalent to money to pay unto my [said] daughter Phebe Latham, or to her heirs, or which they my [said] executors shall see cause, to be left wholly at their discession and as they shall thinke fitt.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my two sons Thomas Ffenner and Arthur Ffenner, inhabitants in Providence in the collony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, whome I have constituted and appoynted to be co executors, of this my last will and testment, all my lands within the townshipp of Providence aforesaid that are already laid out, or to be laid out, together with all my right in comon within the even mile line, and without the seven mile line, be it upland, low land, meadow, or what land so ever which is mine not heretofore disposed of, to be equally devided betwixt my two said sons, or as they shall agree to devide, to have and to hold for them their heirs, executors, administrators and assignes forever:

Item. I give and bequeath unto my two aforesaid sons Thomas Ffenner and Arthur Ffenner all the remaineing part of my moveable estate out of dores not disposed of to my wife with all my cattail and horse kind to be equally devided betwixt them, and also all my houseing besides what privelidge I have above reserved to my wife, I give to my two aforesaid sone to be equally devided betwixt them, their heirs, executors, administrators and assignes:

Item. My will is; that, the roome which my wife shall chuse to live in; after decease shall fall to my two said sones, their heirs executors, administrators, or assignes, to be equally devided betwixt them.

Item. I doe appoint that my two [said] sons shall pay all my debts and ffunerall charges, and doe hereby revoke, dianull and make voyd all former wills and testaments by me heretofore made rattifieing and confirming this to be my last will and testam^t:

In wittnes whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seale this twenty seventh day of Agust in the yeare of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and three.

Arthur Ffenner

Signed, sealed, pronounced, acknowledged and declared by the said Arthur Ffenner to be his last will & testament.

Before us, Daniell Matheson

the mark of

Sarah X Inman

Simon Smith

Arthur Ffenner acknowledged before me at his dwelling house in Providence the third day of September 1703 this to be his last will and testament.

Jonathan Sprague, Justice of y^e Peace.

The will and testament which in this sheete of paper is contained was by the towne councill of Providence at their Meeting the 12^f day of November 1703; by adjournment from November the 5th 1703, examined and prooved.

Attests Tho: Olney Clerk of y^e Councill;

Recorded November the 18th 1703, [prepared?] me

Tho: Olney Clerke of y^e Councill.

The Inventory of the estate of M^r Arthur Ffenner of Providence, deceased, who departed this life the 10th day of October Anno: 1703.

Imprimis,

To his weareing cloathes (namely) 2 hatts, one neckcloath one silke capp, 3 shirts, 3 [pairs] of silver buttons, 5 wastcotts, 7 [pairs] of breches & a [pair] of drawers, 3 loose Coates, one Buff belt, 2 [pairs] of Mittens, one [pair] of Gloves, 3 [pairs] of stockins, one [pair] of Bootes & spurs, & some shooes. [08-06-00]

	lb - s - d
To money in his Purse	00-15-00
To money received since his decease	02-00-00
To Bedding (namely) 8 sheets, 6 Blanketts, 2 Ruggs, over Coverlid, 6 Pillows & Cases, 2 ffether beds, 2 boulsters & Cases, & 2 fflock bedds	09-06-00
To a bedd & bedd stood, & furniture Compleat	10-06-00
To 3 small Table Cloaths, & three Napkins	00-12-00
To 4 Basons, 4 platters, 8 Potts, 7 Porringers, 4 sausers 2 Cupps, one Chamber Pott, one bedd pan, one still or Limbath, one Tinn Pann & Bell Mettle skillet	02-14-00
To A Great Brass Kettle	02-00-00
To 3 old brass Kettles	01-13-00
To 3 Iron Potts, 2 Iron Kettls, a ffrieng Pann & a dripping Pann	02-01-00
To 3 Candlesticks, one of Copper, one of brassd, & one of Iron	00-06-00
To 3 Trammills, 2 pair of fire Tongs, 2 fire slices one Grid Iron & a paire of Bellowes	01-00-00
To A Warmeing Pann	00-08-00
To A great Bible	01-18-00
To A Booke Called the statute	02-12-00
To 7 small bookes	00-19-00
To A Paire of Money Scales	00-06-00
To A Paire of brass scales & lead Weights	00-04-00
To A Joynt Rule	00-02-00
To 2 Bedd studs	00-10-00
To 8 Glass Bottells	00-06-00
To 3 Great Chaires, & 7 small ones	00-12-00
To 5 Chests & 3 Boxes & a Trunck	02-03-06
To A Bridle & sadle, Portmantle & male Pillion	01-00-00
To 4 Keilors, 4 Boules, 6 Pailes & two Runletts	00-15-00
To 2 Gunns & a Pistoll	02-00-00
To 2 Paire of Stilliards	00-15-00
To Three narrow Axes & a broad one	00-09-00
To 2 Addes, one of them Old	00-04-00
To A Spade, a hay knife & a Trowell	00-06-00
To 7 old narrow Axes	00-07-00
To 5 bolts	00-06-00
To 4 Paire of Beetle Ringes & 7 wedges	00-10-00
To 3 Branding Irons, 2 small files, & a Narrow Chizell	00-06-00
To A sharr & Coulter	00-10-00
To An old sharr & Coulter	00-03-00
To 6 Pitchforks & 3 Rakes	00-10-00
To old Iron	00-08-00
To The Iron for a hand Sidar Mill	00-05-00
To one spit & 3 Curtaine Rodds & 3 paire of paire of ffetters	00-18-00
To one Croscut saw, one hand saew & a ffroe	00-10-00
To 3 Augers, A drawing knife & a hammer	00-05-00
To 2 sithes, with tackling to them	00-10-00
To one Sickle & three Old ones	00-03-00
To 2 sides of lether	00-12-00
To A Pannell & 4 Meale Baggs	00-12-00
To Cart & Wheeles & Cart Tacklin	01-15-00
To A Plough & Wheele Barrow	00-10-00

To A Logg Chaine, 2 draught Chaines, & 2 yoakes, & one Ring & stap[le]	01-07-00
To A halfe busshell, a Peck & halfe Peck	00-02-00
To A sled & an Iron bolt	00-06-00
To A yoake of Oxen	08-00-00
To 5 Cowes	12-10-00
To 5 three & vantage Steeres	12-10-00
To one Two & vantage steere	02-00-00
To 4 heiffers	08-00-00
To one two & vantage Bull	01-10-00
To 2 yearelings	02-00-00
To 6 Calves	03-00-00
To one horse	02-05-00
To one horse neere or about 30 yeares old	00-01-00
To some horses & Maares not yet found	00-00-00
To 12 Barrills of Sidar	04-16-00
To 2 Barrills of Peach Jyce	00-12-00
To A Grinding Stone & winch that turnes it	00-07-00
To Sum Cedar Clabbords & shingles	00-16-00
To 12 new Empty Barrill	01-04-00
To Lumber	01-16-00
To 12 Trenchers & 5 Spoones	00-06-06
To one hive of Bees	00-06-00
To Indian Corne	03-04-00
To some wheat & Rie in stack	00-12-00
To Oates in Stack	00-13-00
To Oates threshed	00-02-00
To Cheese	00-18-00
To Butter	01-06-00
To 3 bushell of meale	00-06-00
To Almost a Barrill of Pork	02-08-00
To 6 yards of Sarge	01-04-00
To 5 yards of saloome	00-10-00
To 20 Pounds of sheepes wooll	01-00-00
To 2 meale sives, & 2 Riddle sives	00-06-00
To 2 Spining Wheelles & Cards	00-08-00
To A Cidar Mill & Press	03-00-00
To 29 loads of hay & a stack of Stalkes	20-12-00
To 4 shillings in Money More	00-04-00
To 5 Barrills of Beere	00-10-00
To A small Steele Trapp	00-02-00

Total Sum 166-08-00

A true inventory, errors excepted
Taken by us the 2^d day of November 1703

Richard Browne,
Richard Waterman.

At a meeteing of the towne councell of Providence November the 12^t: 1703
by adjournment from November the 5th, 1703: the afore written inventory was by
the councill examined and allowed: and if more estate may yet be found it is to be
added unto this inventory.

Attests Tho: Olney Clerk of the Councill
Recorded November the 20th: 1703 me Tho: Olney clerk of y^e Councill.

The record of the letter of administration granted to Thomas Ffenner and Arthur Ffenner executors to the last will and testament of their Ffather Captn: Arthur Ffenner as followeth.

Whereas Captⁿ Arthur Ffenner of this towne of Providence in the colloney of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in the Narraganset Bay in New England departed this life the 10th day of October in this present year 1703, and by his last will and testament beareing date the 27th day of August in the yeare of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and three he constituted and appointed his two sons Thomas Ffenner and Arthur Ffenner his executors to performe and execute his said will; and the said executors having exhibited the said will, together with an inventory of their said deceased ffather.

Ffather his estate unto the towne councill of said Providence for their examination, aprobaton, and allowance; the which said will upon the 12th day of November in this present year 1703; was by the said towne councill examined, and approved, and the said inventory also examined and allowed; and whereas you the said Thomas Ffenner and Arthur Ffenner having already given in bond to the said towne councill of said Providence for the true performeance and executeing of the said will and testament; wee Joseph Williams and William Hopkins assistants, jointly together with the rest of the said towne councill, doe all as we are jointly together the towne councill of said Providence, committ unto you Thomas Ffenner and Arthur Ffenner of said Providence, (executors as aforesaid) full power of administration upon the estate of your said deceased ffather (so farr forth as the law impwereth us to doe:) and upon the said estate to administer, and the said will to performe, and execute in all particulars therein contained (for you to doe,) in all points according to the true meaneing and intent of the testator by the said will and testament.

Dated, December the seventeenth
Annoq^e Domini, one thousand
seven hundred and three.

By order, and on the behalfe
of the towne councill
Providence

Wittness Tho: Olney Clerk of the Council.
Samuell Whipple
Edward Smith.

Recorded December y^e 18th: 1703
me Tho: Olney Clerk of the Council.

Will of Thomas Fenner [12335]

In the name of God Amen, I Thomas Fenner of the town of Fairfield in the County of Herkimer and State of New York, being infirm in body but of sound disposing mind and memory, thanks be to God for the same—and considering the uncertainty of this mortal life do make and ordain this my last will and testament, that is to say principally and first of all, I give and recommend my soul into the hands of the almighty God who gave I, and my body to the Earth to be buried in a descent Christian like manner at the discretion of my executor hereafter named and as touching such worldly property with which it has pleased God to bless me in this world, I give and dispose of the same in manner and form as follows. Firstly I order and direct that Phebe Fenner [F 12335] my beloved wife (provided she outlived me) shall have a good and comfortable maintenance out of my estate at the discretion of my executor during her life. I also give to my son William Fenner the sum of forty-five dollars. I give to my son Asabel Fenner [See 11436] the sum of two hundred and twenty dollars together with my wearing apparel—I give to my son George Fenner [F 12335–3] the sum of eighty dollars—I also give to the heirs of my son Daniel Fenner [F 12335–4] deceased as follows: to his three sons George, Nathan, and Daniel Fenner twenty two dollars each, and to his two daughters Amy Griffis

married and Lydia A. Fenner two dollars each. I also give to my Granddaughter Louisa Fenner* one square fall leafed table, one small copper kettle and one small iron pot. I give to my Granddaughter Barbary Fenner* one calico bed quilt and one linen wheel—I also give to my son Thomas Fenner [See 12335] one weavers loom, four reeds, three shuttles, two temples, my sea chest, wall chest, and a fire slice—I also give to my three daughters Katherine Spence [F 12335–6], Jane Sheldon [F 12335–7], & Phebe Burlingame [F 12335–8] all my household furniture (not before named and bequeathed in this will) to be equally divided among them except one tea kettle which I give to Jane Sheldon—I further give and devise to my son Thomas Fenner, Jr. all the remainder of my property both real and personal (not heretofore named) and all my monies and securities for money; to him his heirs and assigns forever provided that the said Thomas shall well and truly pay the several legacies before named, to the respective legatees as follows, the one half of that to Asabel in one year after my decease, that to George in three years and all the other in four years. And I do now ordain and appoint my two sons William and Thomas Fenner, Jr. executors to this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former will by me made—in witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty-ninth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty two—signed published and declared by the above named Thomas Fenner to be his last will and testament in the presence of us who have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses in the presence of the testator.

(signed) Thomas Fenner

Bob Arnold
Thomas Arnold
William D. Gray

* Louisa Fenner and Barbary Fenner could be children of either Thomas Jr. or Asahel [See 12335], since they still carry the Fenner surname. The children of Thomas and Asahel are unknown.

Will of Daniel Abbot [125]

In the name of God Amen I Daniel Abbot of Providence in the county of Providence and colony of Rhode Island & ct. Esq, being grown, aged and infirm, but of save mind and disposing memory, blessed be God and considering my mortality, and the uncertainty of human life, do make and ordain this my last will and testament, in manner and form following. That is to say principally and first of all I commend my soul to Almighty God who gave it. And my body to the earth, to be decently interred at the discretion of executors hereafter named, and all the worldly estate God hath bestowed upon me in this life, I give & dispose of as follows, that is to say...imprimis. My will is that all my just debts, and funeral expenses be first punctually paid by my executors...

ITEM I give and devise unto my nephew, Thomas Fenner [F 1231] all the rents that shall arise on my farm, lying in said Providence, near the town and now in the occupation of James Hoyle, for his support and maintenance during the term of his natural life, and to be paid him annually by my executors, to whom specially I give the sole authority of letting the same from time to time for his use and benefit.

ITEM I give unto my executors a plenary and indefeasible power and authority to sell and convey by authentic deed or deeds with warranty, such and so much of my out lands as they find necessary for the payment of my just debts, if my personal estate shall prove insufficient for that purpose, and to appropriate the money arising by the sale in the most advantageous manner to the above said purpose. Always

excepting out of the power above delegated to my executors the following lands as well as my homestead, [namely], my aforesaid farm the rents whereof I have given to my nephew Thomas Fenner also the farm whereon Andrew Knox dwelt, lying partly in Johnston partly in Cranston, and all my farms lying the township of Scituate called Parker farms, all which lands I hereby prohibit my executors to sell.

ITEM After all my just debts are fully paid by the provision. I have made for that purpose as above expressed. I give and devise unto my cousins, namely Abbot Fenner, and Antram Fenner, sons of my said nephew, Thomas Fenner [F 1231]; to Samuel Fenner [F 12332], Daniel Fenner [See 1233], sons of my nephew Daniel Fenner [F 1233]; to William Fenner [See 1232] and Stephen Fenner [F 12324?], sons of my nephew William Fenner [F 1232]—and to Jabez Bowen and Oliver Bowen, sons of niece Mary Bowen [See 1234], all my house, lands and tenement and real estate whatsoever and wheresoever found to be equally, respect being had to quantity and quality, divided amongst them, and to be and remain unto them respectively, their heirs and assigns forever, under the payments conditions, and limitations hereafter specified, [for example],

- 1st: My will is, that my farm assigned for the support of my nephew Thomas [F 1231], be not divided among my devisees, during the said Thomas's natural life.
- 2nd: My will is that Samuel Fenner [F 12332] aforesaid being of age may, presently, after my decease, enter upon his estate herein given him he paying unto my executors the sum of one thousand pounds old tenor, to be by them applied towards the redemption of my nephew Daniel Fenner's lands [F 1233], mortgaged to Doctor Ephraim Bowen [F 1234] of said Providence.
- 3rd: My will is that said cousins Jabez Bowen [See 1234] enter on their said estates as they severally attain the age of twenty one years—the said Jabez paying or giving security to pay with interest, the sum of one thousand pounds old tenor, to my executors to be by them appropriated to the redemption of the aforesaid lands of Daniel Fenner [F 1233] as soon as the same can be conveniently done.
- 4th: My will, specially is, that if other of my two cousins, Jabez Bowen or Oliver Bowen [See 1234], shall die without lawful issue, that the other of them shall inherit the part of the deceased, but if both of them die without such legitimate issue that then both their dividends in my estate, however modified, devolve on, and I hereby give the same to be equally divided among my afore named cousins, and to be and remain to them in fee—simple forever.
- 5th: My will that my said cousins—Abbot Fenner, Antram Fenner, Daniel Fenner, Thomas Fenner, William Fenner—shall not enter upon their respective estates herein given them until the completion and expiration of ten full years from the date of these presents that my executors shall let and manage their parts, and out of the rents arising therefrom pay unto each and every of the daughters of my aforesaid three nephews, Thomas, Daniel, and William Fenner, however named, one hundred pounds old tenor money apiece or currency equivalent according as they shall be enabled by their receipts, and the circumstances of said legatees require in their judgement, and the remainder of said rents, be by my said executors—applied to the fencing, clearing, and subduing of their lands, and repairing the houses on them erected.

Lastly my will is that if my said cousins, Samuel Fenner [F 12332] and Jabez Bowen [See 1234] or either of them refuse to pay, or give good security to pay the thousand apiece above enjoined them, the entry of him who refuses shall be stopped, and my executors shall receive, and take the rents of his divisible part, until the aforesaid thousand pounds be raised out of the rents of it, for the use abovesaid.

ITEM I constitute appoint and make my said cousin Jabez Bowen and my good friend Darius Sessions of said Providence shopkeeper, joint executors of this my last will and testament.

And I do hereby utterly revoke, disannul, and disallow all former and other wills, testaments, legacies, and devises by me heretofore made, given, or devised, ratifying and confirming this and no other as my last will and testament, in testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand an seal the second day of July in the thirty fourth year of his majesty's reign George the Second King of Great Britain, and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty.

(signed)
Daniel Abbot

Signed, sealed, published, pronounced, and declared by the said Daniel Abbot as his last will and testament in presence of us.

(signed)
Daniel Jenckes
James Angell
Geo. Taylor

At a town council held at Providence on the 17th day of November AD 1760 Daniel Jenckes, James Angell, and George Taylor personally appeared and declared upon oath, that they saw the testator Daniel Abbot sign, seal publish, pronounce, and declare that the afore written instrument to be his last will and testament, and that he was then in his perfect mind and memory, and that they in his presence subscribed their names as witnesses thereto, and Jabez Bowen, and Darius Sessions, namely executors in said will, appeared and accepted of said trust, wherein, said will was by said council approved, accepted, and allowed.

Test. James Angell, council clerk

Revised will of Daniel Abbot [125]

Recorded ye 21st day of Nov. 1760. James Angell, clerk. Be it known unto all men by these presents that whereas I Daniel Abbot of Providence in the county of Providence and colony of Rhode Island & in New England have made and declared and published my last will in writing, bearing the date the second day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty—now I the said Daniel Abbot do by this present codicil, republish, ratify and confirm my said last will and testament, with such alterations therein, as are in these presents specified and made, [specifically], whereas in a paragraph of my said last will are these words—

- 5th: My will is that my said cousins Abbot Fenner, Antram Fenner [See 1234], Daniel Fenner [F 1233], Thomas Fenner [F 1231], and Stephen Fenner [F 12324], shall not enter upon their estates herein given them until the completion and expiration of ten full years from the date of those presents that my executors shall let and manage their parts, and out of the rents arising therefrom pay unto each and every of the daughters of my aforesaid three nephews, Thomas, Daniel, and William Fenner, however named one hundred pounds old tenor money apiece, or currency equivalent according as they shall be enabled by their receipts, and the circumstances of said legatees require, in their my said executor's judgements and the remainder of said rents be by my said executors applied to the fencing clearing and subduing of their lands and repairing of the houses on them erected.

But now upon a more mature deliberation and recollection judging that the provision or fund I have made and in my so last will provided for the payment of my debts, may not be sufficient for that purpose. I do by these presents, ratify and confirm the power and authority delegated to my executors, in the above paragraph for the time therein limited, but with this difference that the rents arising out of the lands therein mentioned shall be by them, wholly applied to the payment of my debts together with the other, provision by me, in my said last will, made for that purpose, in the most in the most advantageous manner until the whole or all my debts be paid unless in the meantime it should be necessary to lay out some part of said rents in repairing the houses on said lands which my said executors are required to do, to prevent dilapidations. And my will further is that after all my debts are fully paid and discharged, the money legacies, in my said last will give to the daughters of my said three nephews. Thomas, Daniel, and William Fenner shall be fully paid out of the residuum left of the whole and for payments of my debts, provided for both in my said last will, and also in this schedule, but if the said residuum should not be sufficient for that end, they shall then take and have an equal average thereof, in lieu of their whole legacy, but if it should prove sufficient for the full discharge of said money legacies, and anything should remain over such remainder I give unto my aforesaid cousins the rents of those lands, be me to them devised as aforesaid—have been set apart for ten years towards the payment of my debts, as is herein above expressed. And my will and meaning is that this codicil or schedule be annexed to, and adjudged to be part and parcel of my sad last will referred to and that all things herein contained, and mentioned shall faithfully and truly performed, as fully and amply in every respect as if the same were declared and set down in my last will and testament. In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and seal the fifteenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty—

(signed)
Daniel Abbot

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the testator, Daniel Abbot as his last will and testament in presence of us.

Daniel Jenckes
James Angell
George Taylor

At a town council held at Providence on the 17th day of November 1760 Daniel Jenckes, James Angell, and George Taylor personally appeared and declared upon oath, that they saw the testator Daniel Abbot sign, seal publish, pronounce, and declare that the afore written instrument to be his last will and testament, and that he was then in his perfect mind and memory, and that they in his presence subscribed their names as witnesses thereto, whereupon the aforewritten instrument was adjudged to be part and parcel of the aforesaid Daniel Abbot's will, and was by said council approved accepted and allowed as such.

Test. James Angell, council clerk
Recorded ye 21st day of Nov. 1760, James Angell, council clerk.

Whereas Daniel Abbot of Providence in the county of Providence in the colony of Rhode Island, who departed this life 7th day of November AD 1760, testate, and did name ordain and appoint Jabez Bowen, Jr. and Darius Sessions shopkeeper both of said Providence executors to his last will and testament who have accepted of said trust and proved said will.

These are therefore in his majesty's name George the second King of Great Britain to authorize you the said Jabez Bowen and Darius Sessions to take into

your clear possession and custody all and singular the goods, chattels, rights, and credits, that belonged to the said Daniel Abbot at the time of his decease and on the same fully administer according to law in order to pay debts and legacies, and fully perform said will, and render a just and true account of your administration when legally called thereunto—

Given at a town council held at Providence on the seventeenth day of November AD 1760. And in the 34th year of his said majesty's reign.

Signed and sealed by order and in behalf of the council of James Angell, council clerk.

Will of Thomas Fenner [12335-1]

In the name of God Amen. I William Fenner of Fairfield considering the uncertainty of this mortal life & being of sound and perfect mind and memory blessed be almighty God for the same do make and publish this my last will and testament in manner & form following (that is to say).

First I give & bequeath unto my beloved wife Patience Fenner all my household furniture excepting three feather beds & bedding for the same. I do also give & bequeath to my eldest son, John Fenner, the sum of eighty dollars. I also give and bequeath to my second son, Joseph Fenner [F 12335-12], the sum of one hundred dollars. I also give and bequeath to my third son, Nathaniel Fenner [F 12335-13], the sum of one hundred dollars. I also give and bequeath to my fourth son, William Fenner [See 12335-1], the sum of thirty dollars. I also give and bequeath to my eldest daughter, Fabritha Tucker [F 12335-14], the sum of thirty three dollars together with one featherbed and bedding for the same. I also give and bequeath to my second daughter, Lucy Fenner [See 12335-1], the sum of eighty dollars also one featherbed and bedding for the same. I also give and bequeath to my third daughter, Linda Nelson [See 12335-1], the sum of forty dollars also one featherbed & bedding for the same. I also give & bequeath to the following persons, [specifically], Collins Mason, Warren Mason, George Mason, William Mason, Asenath Moore, Lucy Ann Mason, & Louisa Mason (my daughter Fabritha's children) the sum of one dollar each which said several legacies or sums of money I will and order shall be paid to the said respective legatees in manner following (that is to say) to my son John in four years after my decease, to my son Joseph in three years after my decease, to my son Nathaniel in two years after my decease, to my son William in one year after my decease, to my daughters Fabritha & Linda in one year after my decease, to Lucy in two years after my decease, to Collins Mason, Warner Mason, George Mason, William Mason, Asenath Moore, Lucy Ann Mason & Louisa Mason in one year after my decease.

I also will and order that the household furniture at the decease of my wife Patience Fenner shall be equally divided among my three daughters and youngest son Calvin Fenner [F 12335-18]. I also give to my daughter Lucy a privilege in the house together with firewood for her use during the time she remains single. I also give & devise to my youngest son, Calvin Fenner his heirs and assigns all my freehold estate consisting of a farm, lying and being in the town of Fairfield, county of Herkimer and state of New York, to hold to him the said Calvin Fenner his heirs and assigns forever, subject however to the exceptions hereafter named. I also will and order that the above named Calvin Fenner pay all the before mentioned legacies or sums of money together with all debts or sums of money I shall be owing at the time of my decease. I also will and order that the before mentioned freehold estate shall be held for security for the payment of the above named legacies and debts until they are paid.

And lastly, as to all the rest, residue and remainder of my personal estate goods & chattels of what kind & nature so-ever I give & bequeath the same to my youngest son Calvin Fenner whom I hereby appoint sole executor of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills by me made in witness whereof I have hereto set my hand & seal the thirty first day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty four.

(signed) William Fenner

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the above named William Fenner to be his last will and testament in the presence of us who have hereto subscribed our names as witnesses in the presence of the testator—Calvin Salisbury, residing in Fairfield county of Herkimer. Sheldon W. Johnson residing in Fairfield, county of Herkimer.